

IN FOCUS

The Official Publication
of the Jamaican
Canadian Association

May 1999

SERVING THE BLACK AND CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY FOR OVER 36 YEARS

Many Hands Make Work Light

By Denise Minick
Fundraising Coordinator

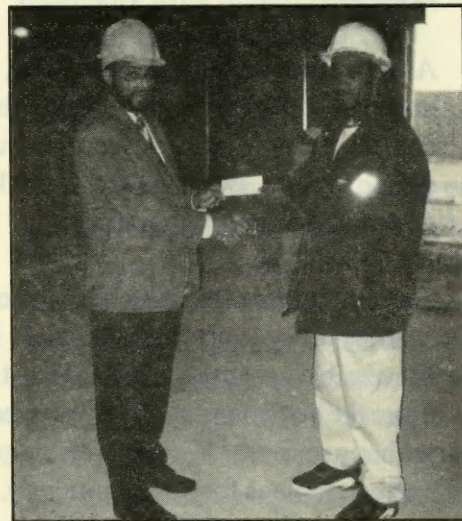
Four years ago, the membership of the Jamaican Canadian Association made a solemn vow. They resolved to establish the first wholly owned West Indian public building in Canada to serve the needs of the membership and the wider community. This building will also serve the important social purpose of contributing to and enriching the Canadian tapestry. The rightness of this decision will soon be bearing fruit.

On August 1st of this year, JCA will open the doors to our new community centre and the membership can justly and rightly point to it and say; I had a hand in that.



Ms. Linda Torney President of the Toronto and York District Labour Council presents a cheque for \$5,775.00 to JCA's President Herman Stewart giving the JCA building fund a boost.

Fundraising is proceeding on a number of fronts. The Capital Fundraising Committee is busy soliciting donations from the corporate sector. The new Chair of the Committee, Erma Collins, and the President are making representations to corporate



Mr. Denis Williamson -President (right) - presents a cheque for a thousand dollars to JCA President Herman Stewart on behalf of the Pike Bryce and Christiana Past Student Association towards the JCA Building fund.

decision-makers and government officials.

JCA hosted a well attended Hard Hat Reception, April 12th, and has had a number of new major gifts toward the building fund. Seventy-five people donned hard hats and were given a tour of the partially renovated site. JCA's President, Herman Stewart, did the honours of Tour Guide.

continued on page 2

IMPORTANT: DIFFERENT LOCATION - PLEASE ATTEND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday May 30, 1999 - 2:00 pm - 6 pm
Grandravine Community Centre
23 Grandravine Drive

*****Runs off Keele Street, two lights north of Sheppard*****

Agenda items include elections of Board Members
and updates on the renovation project

FOR DETAILS CALL: (416) 746-5772

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Editorial

"Our mission is irreversible because our cause is just"

Now that our building renovations have started and work is about mid way completed, we can all take comfort in the fact that our efforts are being justly rewarded.

As we reflect on the past four years, it goes without saying that despite the challenges, we can overcome our difficulties with hard work, determination and high spirit.

The late illustrious Norman Washington Manley once said "our mission is irreversible because our cause is just." From the beginning it was always clear we had a purpose. We wanted a bigger and better place for our community, a legacy we can bequeath to our children and grandchildren. We were soon to learn that the endeavour would become a formidable test of our resilience and conviction.

Our challenges were at times numerous and appeared insurmountable, and those who were and perhaps still are, opposed to our moving forward were many and vigorous in their attempts to stall and block our progress. However, we maintained the focus of our mission and took on each battle with the strength and vigour of a people determined to win the war. We applied ourselves diligently and courageously; cautiously and pragmatically, while holding steadfast to the defined objective.

The war is not yet won, lest we forget, there is a significant sum of money owing to the bank which will test our resolve even further to repay it. We are looking at approximately

\$1,000,000, which will not be easy to eliminate. However, our commitment to the future of our community by far out-weighs any challenges raising a million dollars might present.

As Jamaican/Caribbean people, every day we have to recommit ourselves to battles and challenges. Most times we take the liberty of anticipating the obstacles. How often are we surprised by our predictions? Let's not procrastinate this time around, let's not harbour any illusions about the requirement of the task at hand.

We must not only recommit ourselves to overcoming the difficulties but it is imperative that we join together and work together so that the burden of accomplishing our goal becomes lighter. While we are at it, let's continue to be who we are: kind, warm, loving, caring, energetic and humorous. Also we should continue to wear a smile, so no one can tell when we are having a bad day.

Work Light

continued from Page 1

Several union locals have made financial contributions in support of the Building Fund. The latest, CAW donated \$1000 and CUPE donated \$500. In addition, CUPE is sending out the **Buy A Brick** fundraising kit to all its Toronto members.

A month ago, the Metro Labour Council hosted a highly successful dinner/dance. We have been informed that a presentation will be made to the JCA at the

Council's monthly meeting on May 12th.

Individual donations continue to come in, the latest being Yvonne Blackwood, who, on May 5th donated \$500. We would like to welcome JCA's newest friend, The Peel Guyanese Association for Guyana Health Relief, who donated \$100. They have asked to be counted amongst our supporters.

The DEADLINE for the brick campaign is June 30th. If you have not done so, buy a brick, buy a door, buy a window, and buy a room in the Community Centre.

Do your part. We are almost there..

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Board of Directors:

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Maxine Adams, Treasurer
Haari Abou Korrat, Executive Director
Hector Gray, Executive Secretary
Francella Moore, Membership Services Chair
Fred Irving, Public Reltns. Chair
Patricia Williams, Fundraising Chair
Uriel Soares, Building Chair
Vincent Conville, Education Chair
Pam Powell, Women's Com. Rep.
Ansel Bather, Youth Affairs Chair

Editorial Committee: Lisa Chin Quee,
Francella Moore, Billroy Powell, Herman
Stewart, Pauline Tomlinson

Newsletter Layout: Robert Small

Letters and submissions welcome. The
Editorial Committee reserves the right to
edit materials for length.

President's report

By Herman Stewart

I am pleased to report to you that the renovation project is on schedule and will be completed by mid July. To date we are still within budget thanks to the many volunteers who have come out on "volunteer days" to do their part.

Our fundraising activities are continuing on many fronts. Our "Buy a Brick" campaign is continuing. To date we have collected \$16,000. The deadline for buying a brick is June 30, 1999. I am urging all readers of this report who have not yet purchased a brick to do so today. Don't forget, it takes many bricks to build a community centre.

On the political front, we are continuing to lobby both the provincial as well as the federal government for funding to help with the renovation costs. We have had meetings with several members of parliament from the GTA. They have, so far, expressed their support for what we are doing with a pledge to do what they can to get us financial support.

On the Provincial level, we have submitted a proposal to Trillium Foundation for a capital grant. They do give grants for capital projects. We have applied for the maximum of \$75,000. We have also sent proposals for funding to the Economic Development Minister Al Paladini, and to Premier Harris.

The Metro Labour Council sponsored a dinner/dance in aid of our building fund recently. They hope to raise a few thousand dollars from this event. We recently received a cheque from the Canadian Auto Workers for \$1,000 and a cheque from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Ontario Division, for \$500.

Because of the "Buy-A-Brick" campaign,

we will not have a car raffle this year. We will use the fall to organize and secure prizes for next year's raffle. Hopefully, we will launch our car raffle in March 2000, for the draw to take place in August.

I am delighted that Erma Collins has assumed the Chair of the Corporate Fundraising Committee.

In other news - I recently met with the director of the SIU. The meeting went well. The JCA had an opportunity to express our views and concerns with regard to the SIU and it's operations.

We have extended an invitation to both Prime Minister Chrétien and Prime Minister P.J. Paterson to participate in our grand opening ceremonies on August 7, 1999.

The CIBC has reneged on its commitment to give \$5,000 per year for three years toward our building fund. Their reason is that we did not raise enough money. I made a request for reconsideration. They proposed giving us \$1,645 instead of the \$5,000 they had originally

pledged. We told them that was an insult and we will not accept it. We also made it perfectly clear that our Centre will be built with or without their \$5,000. I will have more to say on this issue at our Annual General Meeting.

We continue to help members of our community with various problems, especially work related issues such as harassment and discrimination.

Election of Board Members;

At our Annual General Meeting on Sunday May 30, 1999, you will be called upon to elect members to various positions on the Board. We are at a very significant point in our history and as such we need members to serve on the Board who are committed and have a vision, as we move forward into the new millennium. I urge all members to come out on May 30th and participate in the election.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who contributed to our building fund.

I hope to see you at our Annual General Meeting on May 30th.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

photo below by Uriel Soares



JCA volunteers contribute to building renovations.

Executive Director Bits & Bites

by Haari Abou Korrat, Executive Director

This past fiscal year was a successful one for the organization. To ensure that the needs of the community were being addressed, funding to enhance current services and/or develop new programs was achieved and new partnerships were forged with organizations within our community as well as the wider community.

Recently two partnerships were initiated: the first one is with Canadian Mental Health Association to conduct a support group for women with mental health issues. Commencing May 5, 1999, these sessions will be conducted from the Driftwood Community Centre, pending the completion of our Community Centre mid-July. The second partnership is with the John Howard Society. Support groups in Anger Management and Conflict Resolution will be conducted to accommodate males who have been court ordered to participate in these programs.

Partnerships with Earls Court Children's Centre and McCauley Children's Centre are being developed. Coordinators for the LIP and Parenting programs will work with staff from these agencies, sharing resources and information on issues and needs of children and parenting. Due to renovations, the Employment Assistance project for older workers was postponed to August 1, 1999.

Plans for participation in this year's Caribana event is forging ahead. Epiphany Restaurant is sponsoring our participation in the parade. If you would like more information or to volunteer on this committee, please call Maurice at extension 232 or Denise at Epiphany Restaurant 740-9329.

The Healthy Babies 0-12 and Parenting program has moved from 2.5 days per week to full time. We

have also added a new component to the program Home Care/Visits.

A number of persons have signed up for the Meals on Wheels program, in partnership with York West Meals on Wheels. York West Meals on Wheels is one of our new partners. Response to the pilot project has been satisfactory thus far.

Volunteers - We are avidly seeking volunteers to work with the Parent Assisted Leadership (PAL) program. We welcome the participation of youth from the community that are willing to donate 2 to 3 hours a week or month as a big sister/brother to children age 7-14 years in the community.

I look forward to seeing most of you at the grand opening of the Community Centre on August 7. Order your tickets early. MasterCard, Visa orders accepted by telephone. For more information, see our website at www.jcassoc.com or call Maurice at extension 232.

North York Seniors Health Centre Update

Submitted By: D. Bailey, Advisory Committee Chair

Last year the Ontario Government announced that Toronto would receive 2,200 Nursing Home beds out of a total of 6,700. This would address factors that would impact on an aging population. The North York General was one of the applicants hoping to address this problem.

Cam Jackson, the minister of Long Term Care, the first for Ontario, visited the Seniors Health Centre for a News Release regarding additional beds for the Centre. After a rigorous screening program, the Government selected the

highest quality providers for Long Term Care Centre, where the focus will be on a home-like atmosphere, where residents can enjoy a good quality of life.

North York Seniors Health Centre was awarded an additional 32 beds to their existing facility; and will build an additional 151 bed facility, in the former City of North York. At present Branson Hospital has an interim 98 beds for which the Centre is responsible. This is important news for our community as it might mean

more beds added to our existing 10 beds.

The current waiting list for the Centre is more than 360 applicants, and the average stay is 3.3 years. We continue to have regular meetings once per month, and every 3 months there is a presentation and information session on pertinent topics that relate to the care and enhancement of the quality of life for the residents.

We are still actively looking for volunteers to work at the Centre. Anyone willing to be a volunteer should contact D. Bailey (416) 622-0617 or the Health Centre (416) 756-1040.

Membership Committee Report

By Francella Moore, Membership Services Chair

Now that spring is almost over and summer is just around the corner, watch out for the other driver who is in a rush and cannot wait for the lights to change properly before moving.

The Membership Committee has been very busy over the past months planning upcoming events.

The annual picnic will be our first event for the summer. This year the picnic will be on Sunday, July 4, 1999. It will be taking place at the Valens Conservation Area, in Hamilton, Ontario. Two buses will be leaving from Toronto, at Yorkdale, North West of the Bay, at 9:00 a.m. sharp and one

bus from Mississauga, at Price Chopper parking lot, Dixie Road & Dundas Street, at 9:00 a.m. sharp. Tickets are available from the Membership Committee and at JCA (416) 746-5772. The last day to purchase tickets is June 18, 1999.

Individuals who purchase tickets from JCA must board the bus at Yorkdale shopping mall. Come out and join the JCA family; be there to participate or watch the dance contests, volleyball, tug-of-war etc. Pick up your tickets early as there will be no tickets selling at

the time of boarding the buses. Ticket prices are:

Adults \$25.00

Seniors \$20.00

Children 12 years old and under \$10.00

The Flag Raising ceremony will be on Sunday, August 1, 1999 at City Hall. It will commence at 2:00 p.m. followed by the Church service at 4:00 p.m. We are looking forward to your attendance.

Remember to inform us if you know of a member who is sick, has passed away or need a visit from the visitation group.

If you are not receiving your mail and telephone calls from us informing you of our events, please let us know by calling the office and leave your complete address and telephone number so that we may update our records.

Letter to the Editor

I would like to make a correction to an article which appeared on page 3 of the February 1999 issue of the In focus. The article stated that the JCA functioned mainly as a social club, and that the Latin Quarters Club was used as headquarters for the Association.

As a founding member I would agree that we had many social functions (as is the case today) and the Latin Quarter Club was used for some of these functions. However, the operation of the Association took place from rented office space which was used as headquarters.

I must also point out that from the inception of the Association it became involved in advocacy social action, the struggle for minority rights and social justice, as was set out in the JCA constitution.

Sincerely, Violet Carter

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Women's Space

WHY ARE WOMEN SO TIRED?

Submitted by Eunice Graham for the Women's Committee

Taken from Special Report in Family Health Magazine Volume 1, Number 1-Autumn, 1998

Part 1 of 11

Here's what a typical day in a woman's life might look like:

She wakes up at 5:30, gets breakfast and makes lunches for the kids, takes them to school, rushes to work, finishes that major project, picks up the kids, picks up the groceries and her husband's dry cleaning, fixes supper, cleans the dishes, supervises homework time, bathes the kids, does the laundry, walks the dog and collapses into bed only to start the whole process over again in the morning. Sound familiar? No wonder women are so bone-weary.

If it's any consolation, a recent study (Toronto Hospital Women's Health Program Study) confirms what you've suspected all along. According to the study's authors, Dr. Donna Stewart and colleagues, women's biggest health complaint is fatigue.

Dr. Stewart, who is Chair of the Women's Health Program at The Toronto Hospital and the University of Toronto cites a variety of reasons for the relentless condition. Many women today not only work outside of the home, but they also shoulder the bulk of household chores, the care of

children and their aging parents. Adding to their exhaustion is a chronic lack of sleep. In the study, women said that they were often awakened by children or elderly mothers wandering in the night or both, says Dr. Stewart.

"The main obstacle for women is that they try to be everything to everybody"

In a more recent follow-up survey to see how women combat their "battle fatigue", The Toronto Hospital Women's Health Program study found that while women's intentions are good, they often fail to meet their commitments to take more time for themselves. They plan to exercise more, go out to a movie with a girlfriend or read a good book says Dr. Stewart, but they just don't follow through. "Clearly, women must make their needs a priority" she adds. "It is a good investment because they are more productive in the long run. The main obstacle for women is that they try to be everything to everybody, she says.

That kind of overload can cause women's health to suffer. This overload can cause a variety of physical symptoms like headaches, heartburn, backache, sleep problems and shoulder and neck pain, says Dr. Carolyn DeMarco. "Being too nice is unhealthy for women," she adds. In her book, Take Charge of Your Body, she urges women to delegate household responsibilities to other family members and to get help when needed. Your teenager can walk the dog, for example, or your husband can battle the toddler.

However, if the family refuses to cooperate, DeMarco advises women to go on strike: stop picking up after them, stop doing their laundry, stop making meals. "I tell women they should go out and eat in a restaurant by themselves. "Another alternative is to hire someone to clean the house for a few hours a week, depending on the household budget. Her women patients are starting to be more open to all those ideas, she adds. "When I see a woman making a change to the way she has been conditioned, it is very gratifying".

Stay Tuned for Part 11 In the Next Issue of In Focus

ANNOUNCEMENT:

1. The JCA is seeking experienced librarian(s) to coordinate/set-up a resource library in our renovated centre.
2. The JCA is seeking experienced painters to help with the painting of our community centre.

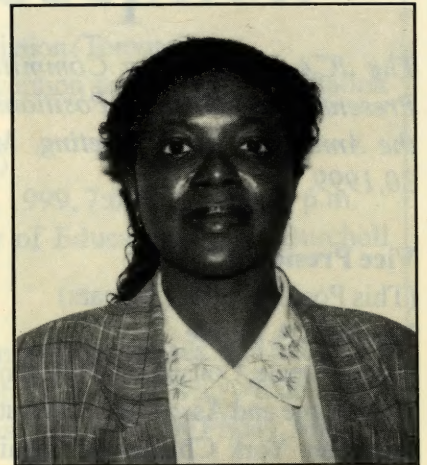
JCA Board Appoints New Treasurer

The Board of Directors of the Jamaican Canadian Association is pleased to announce that Maxine Adams has been appointed Treasurer to finish the term of office left vacant after the resignation of Maria Williams.

Maxine, who has a BA in Political Science and a Certificate in Accounting, was

appointed to the post at the April 16th Board Meeting. Prior to her appointment, Maxine underwent six weeks of training with former Treasurer, Cyndi Anderson.

"We are very pleased to have Maxine on board" says JCA president Herman Stewart. "In addition to her qualifications and experience, she brings a lot of enthusiasm to her job."



Tids-Bits *by Alton Telfer*

Winter is finally withdrawing its presence in favour of spring. Some may say that this was a severely rough winter, but I say otherwise, maybe because I was out of the country when the huge snowfall hit our City. Too bad I missed it, and the only thing I could do then was to watch it on the TV and feel sorry for you all. However, I was around for the next one, which was not so severe. That's the one our Mayor Melvin Lastman got overwhelmed about and brought in the army. What do you think, was that an over-kill?

Now let me take you to somewhere that is much warmer, Jamaica. Did you know that very soon the Jamaican ten dollar note will be history, and will be replaced with a ten dollar coin. You may say that this does not warrant mentioning for what its worth. Notwithstanding, you should be cognizant of this fact.

A seat belt law will also be enacted soon in Jamaica, therefore, be reminded that the next time you visit the island, as soon as you hop into your limousine buckle-up, otherwise you will be breaking the law and may be charged. I am somewhat concerned that so far there is no mention

of exemption regarding older vehicles such as the Zephyr Zodiacs, Morris Oxford etc. A good amount of these cars are still on the road and they were built in

"It costs \$0.44 to Australia as against \$0.71 to Jamaica, just one example. We should be vigilant where inequities like these exist"

the sixties, long before seat belts went on the drawing board. My guess is that this law will get the same respect as the Drink-and-Drive law that was enacted about two years ago. Have you ever seen or heard of anyone being charged for Drinking-and-Driving since this law has been in place.

Here is another mind bothering situation; recently I was made aware that each time one travels to Jamaica via Air Canada a ten dollar security fee is being imposed. This is included in the cost of the ticket. This fee does not apply when travelling to the other islands or else where. This, to me, is another of those inequitable acts administered to us as Jamaicans from time to time. Bell Canada's long distance rate is another. It costs \$0.44 to Australia as against \$0.71 to Jamaica, just one example. We should be vigilant where inequities like these exist. I exhort you once again to start a letter writing campaign to the presidents of these companies demanding an explanation.

Some time ago towards the latter part of 1998, I informed you of the function of "The Black Community Consultative Committee. At the time, I explained the good work the Committee is doing under the chairmanship of Jeff Patterson, a former JCA Board member. I am now pleased to report

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JCA Nominating Committee

The JCA Nominating Committee Presents Candidates for Positions at the Annual General Meeting, May 30, 1999.

Vice President:
(This Position is for (2) years)
Valerie H.A. Steele
Valerie Steele, Consultant, President of Ashbourne and Associates. Executive member- York Children's Carnival Committee, current Chair Division 13-Community Police Liaison Committee and a member of the School Advisory Council (former City of York). She played an active role in the JCA 1998 car raffle campaign. If elected, she is committed to working with the Board and membership to move the JCA forward into the next millennium.

Treasurer:
(This position is for (2) years)
Maxine Adams (recently appointed to the position to complete the remainder of the current term)
Maxine Adams has a BA in Political Science and a Certificate in Accounting. She underwent six weeks of training with former treasurer Cyndi Anderson to acquire first hand knowledge of the requirements of the position. She was subsequently appointed to the position during the JCA Board meeting that was held on April 16, 1999. She views this opportunity as a way of enhancing her accounting skills while making a contribution to our community and the JCA.

Public Relations Chair:
(This position is for (2) years)
Claudette Cameron-Stewart has been an Ontario Provincial Government employee for the past 9 years. She is working as a budgeting and

administration officer in the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Claudette has writing and marketing experience. "Volunteerism is in my blood and I am looking forward to working with the organization that I have always admired and respected." Claudette volunteers with the following organizations: The Medical Association, United Way, and Peel Literacy Guild. She is a volleyball coach and a board member of a theatre company.

Executive Secretary
(This position is for (1) year)
Hector A Gray (incumbent)
Hector A. Gray considers it a privilege and honour to serve the Association, and if re-elected for a second term, will give his best effort in helping to further the realization of the goals and objectives of the JCA. Hector is the current Executive Secretary. He previously served the JCA in other capacities, for example, Chair of the Works Committee and Recording secretary.

Pauline Reid
Pauline Reid is a long time member of the JCA. She served on several of the organization's standing committees. Currently she is the secretary of the Membership Committee. Pauline believes that she can make a significant contribution to JCA and the community.

Education Committee Chair:
(This position is for (1) year)
Vincent Conville (incumbent)
Vincent Conville is a teacher

working with the Toronto District School Board. His community involvement encompasses the following: thirty years as a member of the JCA; a former President of the JCA. He served on the JCA Board at different intervals as President, Chair of Building and Education Committees. He also served on various standing committees: Building, Fundraising, Membership and Education.

Vincent volunteers with other organizations outside of the JCA. He is a Former President of John Brooks Foundation and Scholarship Fund and a Former President of the Mico Alumni Association (Canada).

Recardo Arturo Tomlinson
Recardo Arturo Tomlinson is currently a Human Resources Officer with Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre. He is a member the newly created JCA Youth Affairs Committee. He would like to join the JCA Board as the Education Chair because he is committed to Education and would like to make a difference. Recardo has a Degree in Business Management, a Diploma in Business Management and Certificate in Human Resources Management.

Membership Services Chair:
(This position is for (2) years)
Francella Moore (incumbent)
Francella Moore is the current Membership Services Chairperson and she would like to be re-elected for a second term.

Francella volunteers with the Guildwood Village Community Association and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Building Committee Chair:
(This position is for (2) years)
Uriel Soares (incumbent)

continued on page 9

Nominations

continued from page 8
Uriel Soares is seeking a second term as chair of the Building Committee. He was first elected to this position in May 1997 and feels that he is able to continue making a contribution to the JCA and the community.

Uriel has a B.Sc. in mechanical Engineering and is a registered professional engineer in Ontario.

The JCA Nominating Committee is seeking qualified candidates to run for office on the Board of Directors at the Association's Annual General Meeting, Sunday, May 30, 1999. Positions that will become vacant are as follows:

Positions

Positions and Term of Office

Vice-President: 2 years
Executive Secretary: 1 year
Treasurer: 2 years
Public Relations Committee Chair: 2 years
Membership Committee Chair: 2 years
Education Committee Chair: 1 year
Building Committee Chair: 2 years
Trustee: 2 years

As we enter the new millennium and assume new responsibilities for our newly renovated community centre the onus is on us to respond with vision and commitment in order to make the Association strong.

Individuals interested in running for positions on the JCA Board of Directors may call the JCA Office (416) 746-5772, and leave a message for the Nominating Committee.

Graduates Reception

The Alliance of Jamaican Alumni Association (Toronto) Invites you to our Annual Graduates Reception and Awards Presentation at Earl Haig Secondary School:
100 Princess Avenue (Yonge/Sheppard)
North York, Ontario, Thursday June 3, 1999, 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Keynote Speaker-Jamaica's Minister of Education: Hon. Burchell Whiteman

For more information, or to submit the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of graduates of African/Caribbean heritage who would like to attend this very special celebration, please call or fax by Friday, May 15, 1999

The Alliance of Jamaican Alumni Association (Toronto)
Tel: 905-450-9987/ Fax: 905-450-8454

Jamaica is open for business-Sen. Henry Wilson

By Carolyn Goulbourne-Warren
JIS Information Officer

Minister without portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Sen. the Hon. Maxine Henry-Wilson, has made a pitch to Jamaicans living in Canada to invest in Jamaica. She said that they could be a part of Jamaica's potential, "not just in terms of investment of capital, but also in terms of investment of intellectual and human capital."

Minister Henry-Wilson was on a five-day mission to Canada recently to meet with the Jamaican Community, Canadian government officials and the media. She was accompanied on her tour of Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto by Jamaica's High Commissioner to

Canada, His Excellency Raymond Wolfe.

Jamaica, said the Minister, has an adequate labour market and offers many benefits to entrepreneurs with initiative. "We have trainable labour force, we have done some reform of the labour market and we have spent a lot of time and effort to ensure that the transaction time for those who wish to do business in Jamaica is significantly reduced."

Highlighting some of the positives in the economy, Minister Henry-Wilson said that the net international reserves now stand at \$600 million, coming from a negative of \$800 million and this represents 15 weeks worth of reserves, plus a good inflation rate at the end of the fiscal year.

continued on page 11

Veteran JCA Member Assume Chair of the Capital Fundraising Committee

By Erma Collins

I have accepted the challenging task of chairing the JCA's capital Fundraising Committee (changed from "corporate" to "capital" because we do want donations from individuals as well). The challenge can not be overestimated. The experience of the last two years has taught us that people do not respond to fundraising letters

sent to them by strangers. That is where you, a supporter of the JCA, comes in.

Do you know anyone in a corporation, or any individual, that you think is a potential donor? Can you speak to that person and ask if we may send a package of information? Can you then send us the name and telephone

number of your contact and give us permission to use your name? Can you help us in the follow-up stage?

Better yet, can you host a brunch/dinner/reception to which you invite potential donors?

We definitely need the help of every JCA member reading this newsletter. If you can help, do call me at (416) 496-2818.

List of Coming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Annual General Meeting	Sunday, May 30	2p.m.	Grandravine Com. C./Arena Rm.#107
Annual Picnic	Sunday, July 4		Valens Park Hamilton
Cultural Tour of Underground Railroad	Sat. & Sun. July 10&11		Detroit, Mich. City Hall 2nd Floor
Flagraising Ceremony	Sunday, August 1	2 p.m.	Podium Roof
Jamaica Independence Church Service	Sunday, August 1	4 p.m.	JCA Centre
Youth Affairs Committee Formal Launching	Thursday, August 5	6:30 p.m.	JCA Centre
Formal opening: JCA Building	Saturday, August 7		JCA Centre
Independence Dinner/Dance	Sunday, August 29	2-6 p.m.	JCA Centre
Quarterly Members' Meeting	Sunday, September 19	2-5 p.m.	JCA Centre
Annual Seniors' Dinner	September & October		
Membership Drive Months	Sunday, November 28	2p.m.	JCA Centre
Quarterly Members' Meeting	Saturday, December ?		
Christmas Grand Market	Sunday, December 5	2-5 p.m.	JCA Centre
Children's Christmas Party	Friday, December 31	8 p.m.	JCA Centre
New Year's Eve Dinner/Dance			

Tids-Bits

continued from Page 7

that as a result of our advocacy, we have seen good results in the hiring practice of police officers, especially as it relates to people of African origin.

We are now actively looking for suitable candidates. If you are over the age of 19 years, have a minimum of grade 12 education and want a career in policing, please contact us at (416) 635-2747 or Constable Trevor Bennett at the Community Policing Support

Unit (416) 808-7064, 40 College Street Toronto.

Before I conclude, I must also inform you that we are now examining the method by which promotions within the force are executed, with a focus on the staff sergeant level and upwards.

Mayhem in Jamaica

By Asha Tomlinson

On my temporary farewell from school, I was requested to attend my grandmother's 90th birthday celebration in Jamaica. I had an overwhelming feeling of excitement. I had not visited Jamaica in almost ten years and I was officially on my summer vacation; a convenient combination. After my last exam I hustled and bustled around to make my vacation "just right". Two of my close friends were also going with me, which heightened my expectations for the vacation.

Upon our arrival we were welcomed by a festive singing choral, inviting us to experience the beautiful, tropical island. We were definitely enthralled by the bright sun and joyful spirits, but the worst was yet to come.

The Jamaican government as part of a tax package in its recent budget had announced an increase of more than 30% in the price of gasoline. This, on Monday, April 19th, culminated in rioting across the island. Some Jamaican citizens claimed that gas prices had risen from twelve Jamaican dollars to twenty dollars in a matter of weeks. Gas is an essential commodity that is used daily by all Jamaicans who operate motor vehicles. The increase in price produced a secondary effect on products and services affecting many aspects of Jamaican life.

Wide spread protest occurred due to the fact that many Jamaicans believe the rise in gas prices is excessive and unfair. Many citizens fear that they will not be able to function with the price increase, considering many are currently on the edge of poverty. For example, the proposed rise in price to travel on the local buses can make travelling inaccessible for many. Some motorist may not be able to go to work if they cannot

afford to put gas in their cars.

Jamaicans believe that gas prices are at its worst and the economic situation has been steadily deteriorating. Citizens wanted the government to know that they did not agree with the decision to hike gas prices. Some decided to take action by peaceful protest and others decided to protest by means of riots and roadblocks. The foreign and local media alike, of course, focused on the riots.

Many angry citizens used gasoline to burn cars, tires and anything else that was flammable and it escalated to looting, robbery and vandalism. As well, the burning debris was used as roadblocks, contributing to the general mayhem and the island was held hostage for three days. Calm returned after the Prime Minister, the Hon. P.J. Patterson announced that he would assign a committee to reassess the decision and make recommendations.

The riots affected all businesses and, most importantly, the tourism industry. The impact on tourism could have future consequences. Already, prospective tourists have been deterred from Jamaica due to the negative news coverage on the riots. Tourism is one of Jamaica's largest source of foreign exchange.

Did the rioters not think of this dire result? Is there a solution? Certainly not by rioting. Whatever happened to peaceful protest?

Whatever the case, there are bigger issues at hand. These riots exhibit the lack of respect and communication between the people and the government. This is a universal problem. It also exhibits the struggle that developing countries are facing to bring themselves economic empowerment and equality. As well, it exhibits the large discrepancy between lower and middle class citizens. Jamaicans at the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder formed the majority of rioters because the rise in gas prices will affect them the most.

The riots are a sign to the government that the citizens' voices are not being heard and their needs are not being met. It is time to listen to the people.

Open for business

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"We're not pretending that we have everything under control, we're not pretending that we have paradise but what we know and what we're convinced about is that we're a society that's on the right road and with a lot of potential."

Minister Henry-Wilson noted that if Jamaicans living overseas become a part of the national development of Jamaica then this will "ensure that when the millennium dawns, Jamaica will be a part of the sunrise and we will be able to shine on the international horizon. Contact: Carolyn Goalbourne-Warren, JIS Information Officer, (416) 598-30008.

Travel

Kenya, Memories for a life time

by Lisa Chin Quee

Part 2

One of the most memorable aspects of my trip was the warmth and hospitality of the people in Kenya. During my four months there, I was often invited to drop by someone's home or for dinner.

I lived and taught high school students at a boarding school in Gnong, a village just outside of Nairobi. On the first day of class, I was quite nervous because I did not know what to expect from my students. It was very obvious that they too did not know what to expect from this "Mzungu" (term usually used for Caucasians, but used to describe me as a "Westerner"). The young men were quiet as their questioning eyes pierced the air like daggers towards this foreigner at the front of the room, while the young women filled the same dense air with nervous giggles. As I introduced myself and told them a little about my background, I could see in the softening of their eyes and the relaxation of their stares that their questions were being answered. However, it was not until I told them that I was Jamaican that I felt the instant acceptance. At which point, I was inundated with questions about reggae music and Bob Marley and asked if I smoked "bongi" (marijuana). They believed it was legal to smoke it in Jamaica. I managed to convince them that it wasn't true. My Jamaican heritage paved the way to a semester filled with mutual respect, learning and laughter. They were excited to teach me their way of life and were quick to warn me if they thought I might be violating any codes of conduct.

Although I enjoyed being with my students, I always looked forward to my weekends in Nairobi. Amid "jambo teacher", narrow walkways surrounded by homes of concrete and invitations to come and visit, I would stroll to the bus stop. I would usually wait for the bus with a few others, and it was common to see a Masai, complete in traditional clothing, adorned in beads of reds, whites, and blues. At first I could not stop staring, the Masai tribe is known for their beautiful dress and pride of heritage and culture. I remember my initial reaction was "wow, this is exactly like national geographic". Although, I saw Masai's regularly, their presence always captured my attention.

Once I arrived in Nairobi getting of the bus would always be a moment filled with anxiety. I would have to bang on the bus and let them know in my best Swahili that I needed to get of the bus. (Just like Jamaica)

On my weekends in the city, I alternated my living arrangements between a youth hostel or at the homes of new found friends. There were always things to do in Nairobi; clubs, plays, sporting activities etc. A popular spot at the end of the month was Carnivores, a restaurant and night club named for the variety of barbecued wild game available for those with an adventurous palate for new delicacies such as giraffe, antelope etc. Later on in the evening, on the other side of this oversized African hut that expanded across acres of land, the DJ spun the latest R&B, Hip Hop, and Reggae.

The taste of wild game was titillating to my taste buds, but not to my supreme sense of adventure. I

wanted to be among these animals of the wild, so I decided to go on a safari. I packed up my gear and slept under the stars with the elephants, giraffes, hyenas, snakes and my favorite—lions. By day, we drove around admiring them. Close enough that on one occasion an elephant felt it had to defend itself, and therefore, prepared to charge. Fortunately, our experienced guide brought us through without a scratch.

I urge you to take this trip yourself. Good luck.

JCA Picnic

The Jamaican Canadian
Association
invites you to its Annual Picnic
Sunday, July 4, 1999

Valens Conservation Area
Hamilton, Ontario

Buses leave Dixie Road & Dundas
Street, Mississauga.

Price chopper store
9:30 p.m. sharp

Also Yorkdale Mall, north of the Bay,
9:00 a.m. sharp

Activities: games, sports, bring your
baseball bat; there will be prizes and
lots more.

Walk the beach at your own risk.

COST: Adults \$25.00

Seniors \$20.00

Children under 12 yrs

\$10.00

Tickets can be purchased from the
JCA Membership Committee
tel. (416) 746-5772.

Deadline to purchase tickets is
June 18, 1999.